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OBSERVATIONS
ON THE
DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATION'S CAPITAL.

By Tallmadge A. Lambert.

[Read before the Society January 4, 1897.]

The evolution of the modern state may be measurably traced in the development of its Capital City. The foundations of London and Paris, it is true, were laid with little reference to the subsequent representative characters of those two cities and at times when neither the autonomy, nor the national glory of Great Britain, or of France was even remotely anticipated. From the period, however, when England, under the vigorous rule of the Plantagenets and France under the politic sway of Louis the Eleventh, became in effect, as well as in name, a thoroughly centralized government, London, as well as Paris, expanded in the direct ratio of national growth and reflected faithfully the genius of national development. If this be true of the metropolis accidentally planted on the banks of the Thames and of the city casually set in the center of the Seine, the observation is no less just in respect of such younger capitals as Vienna, Berlin and Moscow.

With yet greater truth does the observation apply to our own Washington. Here, beside the tawny Poto-

mac, the seed was sown, scarcely more than a century ago, which was preordained by the sower to germinate the municipal plant which should grow with the growth and develop with the energies of the Nation.

The hardy colonists emerged from their Revolutionary struggle individually free and personally independent. The reaction from political thralldom and personal dependence had well nigh precipitated the opposite evil of administrative paralysis and the undue assertion of the rights of the individual man. History and the mistakes of history were equally before them and they were singularly well fitted by native discernment and scholastic attainment to be instructed by the one and warned by the other. That they should have perpetuated, for a time, the errors of the Archaian League and the Helvetic Cantons ought not to be for us so much matter of surprise as that, in swift recognition of their mistake, they should have dissolved the nerveless bond of a confederacy and, having struck out for themselves in the science of politico-philosophy, the essentially new and original idea of nationality, they should have boldly converted themselves into a nation of constituent States.

When the Constitutional Convention of 1787 met it was at an awful crisis in the affairs of mankind. Its members had been tried by the triple fires of war, of political revolution and of philosophical disputation. The area was marked by social convulsion, governmental disruption and theoretical speculations upon the institutions, the capabilities and the temporal destinies of mankind. To the highly bred and highly endowed members of this remarkable convention—some of whom held masters' degrees from the most noted of the English Universities—all that could be gleaned from the story of past dynasties was clearly revealed.

To the practical economics of Aristotle they added a profound knowledge of the institutional histories of Greece and Rome and of the modern states which owe their origin to the dissolution of the Roman Empire. Above all they had familiarized themselves with the valuable method of political comparison and of politico-philosophical disquisition which had been adopted by Montesquieu to sway, to direct and to captivate the minds of his cotemporaries. The deliberations of men so experienced, so endowed and, mentally, so well equipped could not have failed to be productive of adequate result. The event, however, was such as must have exceeded all cotemporaneous expectation. With the simple formula "We, the people," was projected the planetary system of States and Governments a creation absolutely new, curiously unique and—most serious consideration of all—wholly untried. It was no less than the astounding adaptation of the theory of nationality to an indeterminate number of municipal bodies each moving within its own political orbit independent of but, nevertheless, in strict co-ordination with the other. It is as though the authors, in their quest of a comprehensive system of government which should supply the deficiencies in the discarded leagues, alliances and confederacies of the past, had imitated the brilliant achievement of their fellow countryman, Franklin, and, exploring the circumambient ether, had traduced from the planetary system its primordial law for the practical use and government of men who were not more desirous to be free than to conserve their freedom by the self-imposed restraints of Order. For the development of this virgin idea there was, luckily, at hand a virgin soil. No clearance of weed-like prejudices and gnarled and misshapen customs was needed for its planting and untrammelled growth. How it ger-

minated and how beneficently it has developed the free, the contented and the prosperous condition of 70,000,000 of the human race to-day attests.

This nation of component states and constituent citizens, unlike the governments previously known to historiographers, had, as we have seen an *a priori* existence. Its scheme was established in advance or, at the most, at the very instant of its creation. Instead of arising fitfully and perilously upon the strata formed by successive civic convulsions—instead of projecting, as by alluvial accretion, a scheme of organic existence by the slow accumulation of customs and traditions, it started into being accurately defined and carefully limited by the injunctions and the sanctions of a carefully devised written constitution. Its advent was like that of the fabled Minerva—fully armed, with lance in rest and defensively provided with corselet, helm and targe.

To me, reflecting upon the events of this stupendous æra it has ever seemed that the moral and intellectual revolution which terminated with the overthrow of the Federation and eventuated in the birth of this marvellous idea of composite nationality was the most remarkable and salutary in the entire history of the human race. The fame of it far transcends the reputation, great as it is, which the actors in that revolution had just achieved in the recently concluded struggle for political independence. Both were timely for both, as I have already observed, occurred at a supreme—an awful—crisis in the affairs of men. The one secured possession of that freedom which the other is designed to preserve. In the proportion that it is even more commendable to save than to acquire is the relative practical value to its possessors of the fruits of the two revolutions.

Having worked out this idea of nationality and

given it permanent shape and expression in the Federal Constitution, it became the immediate concern of those who had framed that instrument to provide for the abstract entity—the creation of their philosophical speculation—a fixed and independent abiding place. It is the commonly received opinion that the reservation of a special and exclusive site for the nation's capital was inspired by the apprehension of possible interference with the freedom of legislation in situations not wholly subjected to the control of the general government. The occurrence of the military  meute at Philadelphia while the Congress was there assembled is usually referred to as conclusive of the correctness of this theory. I think, however, that the isolation of the Capital City of the country was the result of a profounder and more philosophical consideration. I prefer to regard it as the logical consequence of the national idea of government. While the newly emancipated colonies yet constituted a league their several representatives were essentially ambassadors and when they met it was to consult upon a limited range of subjects relating, almost exclusively, to matters of common defense. For this purpose it little mattered where they might meet or that they should establish by common consent a permanent place of meeting within the limits of any determinate state. There was no ground common to the confederacy which could serve the purpose of a permanent meeting place and if there had been such common ground the essential motive for devoting it to this purpose was, of necessity, wanting. With the adoption of the Constitution that motive was distinctly supplied by the scheme of national unity which the Constitution exhibits. A nation was thereby formed and with it, as a necessary corollary, a national abiding place was projected. The

one is as little conceivable apart from the other as would be the living torso from the governing head. What the sages—I had almost said the magicians—of the Constitutional Convention succeeded in doing was to frame a gigantic and unprecedented Corporation—a juristic being of colossal proportions whose constituent elements were, primarily, persons in their normal and natural relations and, secondarily, persons in their abnormal and corporate relations. It is in the former or primary sense that the expression “We, the people of the United States” is used in the great constituent act of the new government. Unity had been sought for by the Articles of Confederation—Union was accomplished under the Constitution. The latter is a charter resting upon solemn covenant—the former had been a pact resting upon consent—a mere rope of sand. Out of the projected union had been evolved the paramount idea of Nationality. The states were to be no longer bound together by a friable league. They were to become the component parts of a national system whose primary constituents would be the individual citizens of the several States. From the coordination of the States was to be evolved a government whereof each state would be an element and which would, by its very essence, be inclusive of all the State or, as the idea is sometimes sought to be expressed, the States were to become *imperii in imperio*.

If I have been clear in stating my view of the origin of our government it becomes easy to understand why its founders should have sought, simultaneously with its organization, to establish a suitable place for its administration. It is equally comprehensible why the site to be selected should have been subjected to its exclusive jurisdiction. If it is deemed expedient to establish for a corporation, whether private, public or

quasi-public, an office for the unfettered transaction of its affairs how much more must this necessity have impressed itself upon the minds of our Constitution framers in respect of the transcendent corporation which they were engaged in creating?

The result, as we know, was the selection by Washington and the acceptance by Congress of the area of ten miles square which formed the original limits of the Federal District. A more unpromising site could scarcely have been proposed to the fashionable and exclusive sets of such centers of luxury and refinement as the cities of Philadelphia, New York, Albany and Boston are represented to have been at that time. To make it incumbent upon the representatives of such cultured constituencies to abandon, for even a time, their highly civilized surroundings, for the Council House located in a comparative wilderness was, in effect, to require them to repeat some of the self-sacrificing experiences of their hardy ancestors when, as pioneers, they deserted the soft delights of European society to plant the seeds of civilization in the virgin soil of the new world. Animated, it may be, by much the same spirit of heroism and self abnegation these, their worthy descendants, failed not, at the call of duty, to sacrifice personal comfort for the public weal. They came, they saw, they conquered—as well their individual prejudices as the natural obstacles by which they were surrounded. West of Rock Creek, the patented Rock of Dumbarton exhibited a social foundation already fifty years old and a culture not second in some respects to that which formed the boast of the cities I have named and Alexandria was a chief emporium of the South. Looking, however, eastward of the Creek the Federal City, about which speculation was naturally rife, existed, practically, in the imagina-

tions of men save, so far, as their imaginations may have been stimulated by the only tangible evidence of existence afforded by the magnificent, I had almost said, the magniloquent, plan of the prescient L'Enfant. The pioneer, however, was speedily at work. Before the nervous tension of his stalwart arm the forest rapidly disappeared—marsh was transformed to *terra firma* and, with the erection of the Capitol, the Executive Mansion, Post Office and other buildings appeared at first in rows, as if for mutual encouragement and, then, singly, here and there; along the rudely defined streets and avenues, the dwellings of those who, inspired by the courage of their republican convictions, ventured to establish, amid such unfamiliar and unpromising surroundings, their *Lares* and *Penates*. All honor to these adventurous founders of our Nation's Capital. For them existed no hope of civic honor and official recognition. They were not even at liberty to style themselves citizens of the territory whose waste they had redeemed. They were residents, merely, or, more properly, comorants. The single reservation made in their favor by the acts of cession of right in the soil which they severally possessed distinguished them from squatters or actual trespassers. With no expectation of political preferment they were content to relinquish the cherished right of suffrage and to link their fortunes with the nascent destinies of the infant capital of a no less infant republic. It is not easy to withhold our admiration for the confidence which inspired those early dwellers within our gates—equally in the stability of the new government and in the success of its projected capital. For many decades this confidence was subjectively sustained. The work of capital-building, unlike the vigorous work of nation-building, absolutely languished. Notwithstanding

the liberal donations in land which had been made by the Nineteen proprietors of the city's territory; notwithstanding the gratuity by Maryland of \$72,000 and by Virginia of \$120,000 munificent offerings both, when we reflect that they proceeded from the exchequers of war-ridden and impoverished communities, the work of improvement went forward with painful slowness. Making all due allowance for the exigencies—the *res augustae domi*—of the federal government in the first quarter of the century, the extreme parsimony exhibited by successive Congresses in dealing with the territory committed to their exclusive charge by the Constitution has never seemed to me to be capable of justification. Hence, I repeat the confidence of the earlier inhabitants in the future stability of the capital was for decades, aye for a generation or more, subjectively nourished. It certainly derived support from no extraneous sources.

I have adverted to the liberality of the nineteen original proprietors in dealing with the Commissioners for laying out the Federal city. It is not claiming too much to assert that history shows few parallels to the disinterestedness of these liberty-loving farmers—these simple minded gentry of the soil.

It has been the fashion to disparage their motives and to hold that they were not free from a speculative regard for the effect which the location of the nation's capital might exert upon the residué of their landed possessions. It should be remembered, however, that their holdings bounded upon a navigable stream whose availability for commerce had already assured the prosperity of the neighboring city of Alexandria and was rapidly developing the contiguous municipality of Georgetown. The lands of these proprietors were yet more advantageously located than either of the towns

I have mentioned, since they were bounded on two sides by the Potomac and its navigable Eastern Branch. There was every reason, therefore, to anticipate the ultimate rise, at this point, of a city which, possessing a more extensive navigable front than either Alexandria or Georgetown, would speedily overreach both in the race of commercial prosperity. Besides, the suggestion is not to be tolerated that the selection of the site for the federal city was determinable by the cupidity of the government, on the one hand, or the speculative schemes of individuals on the other. Perish the very thought that such ignoble aims could have influenced the one or such venal considerations have animated the other! I prefer to believe—and I think I am sustained in the belief by contemporaneous records—that the liberal donation of 3,606 acres of private land for streets and of 982 acres, in 10,136 building lots to the general government, proceeded upon motives as disinterested as they were patriotic and liberal. If this was, unhappily, not the case certainly the anticipation of any great appreciation of their retained holdings by reason of the location of the federal city were very inadequately realized in the lives of the original proprietors and they must have found occasion, more than once, to rue the day when they sacrificed arable and productive acres for imperfectly projected and illy paved streets and lots that served no other purpose than to pasture the domestic cows and goats of a new and struggling population.

However this may have been the city, ill favored as yet, grew as the nation developed and waxed, eventually, sturdy and strong. It was not, we must confess, a picturesque growth. The older sections exhibit, at this day, the deplorable absence of architectural adornment from the dwellings of that primitive time.

The sanitary condition, too, of the low-lying area was something hardly conceivable by those of a later generation acquainted only with the hygienic attributes of the modern sewer and the beneficent results of malarial reclamation. It is within the writer's memory that almost the entire limits of what was known in earlier municipal phraseology as the First Ward—a section which has always been devoted to fashion and diplomacy—the malarial influence of neighboring and exposed alluvial deposit was exhibited in the continual recurrence of fever and ague. I know whereof I speak for, about the close of my first decade I was an inmate of my grandmother's household on I between 18th and 19th streets and the remembrance of my truly bitter experiences with daily doses of quinine to avert or to mitigate the quotidian or tertian alternations of shivering cold and throbbing heat is yet vividly retained. The fact, too, that I was only one of a multitude of sufferers from the same annual endemic never suggested itself for a moment as a solace to my childish sensibilities. It was pure, unadulterated and unmitigated suffering—made all the more intolerable by the now exploded theory which denied to the parched lips of the fever stricken patient the eagerly longed-for draught of cool and limpid water. Happily for the present generation the development of science and a more liberal policy on the part of the government has removed the evil to which I refer. The fetid and stagnant stream which formerly bisected the city and converted one of its halves into a veritable island has been covered and converted to its legitimate use as a *clbaca maxima*. In other directions sewers radiate from similar trunks in conformity with a system that is yet approaching perfection. The malaria breeding shallows of the Potomac are being fast reclaimed to *terra firma* and it is not

to be doubted that the swamps which fringe and disfigure the Eastern Branch of that river will shortly disappear in response to the intelligent demands of science. All this has been the result of thirty years of progress. If we add five years to that period in retrospect what a vastly different spectacle presents itself to the mental vision from that which greets us outwardly at present!

Then grim-visaged war reared his horrid front within the land. The growth of national prosperity had in some respects transcended the development of the capital city. Visitors from neighboring cities did not attempt to conceal the disappointment and disgust with which they contrasted the superior attractions of their own municipalities with the sordid attributes of the nation's capital. The really superior private residences might have been readily counted. The section bounded by K, Fourteenth, the Boundary and by Rock Creek which is now occupied by palatial improvements was then but sparsely inhabited and in great part uninhabitable by reason of its marshy character. The more pretentious dwellings were to be found about Lafayette Square and for a limited distance along the streets from F to W west of Sixteenth street. F street from Seventh to Fifteenth afforded no suggestion of its present availability for business purposes and, if I remember correctly, was not even paved or, if paved at all, paved only with cobblestones such as made Pennsylvania Avenue, throughout its entire length, a veritable bed of torture. North of F street I do not recall a single carriage-way that was even macadamized. On more than one occasion I remember to have seen long trains of army wagons stalled in the mud of H street and of Rhode Island Avenue.

At that time I was an undergraduate of the George-

town University. The dread alarm had broken, with startling effect, upon the peaceful quietude of our academic surroundings. What is worse, the exigencies of the situation made it necessary to quarter upon us, for a time, the Sixty-ninth regiment of N. Y. National Guard. This regiment was composed, exclusively, of genuine sons of Erin—ever ready to fight for the liberties of others though powerless to unite in defense of their own. The men had been hastily mustered into service and upon their arrival at the College were undisciplined and somewhat impatient of restraint. They were on the borders of the enemy's country, too, and their fervid imaginations inclined them to see an armed foe in every object which they viewed in the uncertain light of the gloaming or under the darker shadows of night. The result of the nervous tension was speedily exhibited. Night after night and sometimes, at intervals during the same night, the inmates of the College would be aroused by the sharp and successive calls of the sentries in response to the alarm of an outlying picket, followed immediately by the roll of the drum, the rapid formation of the men under arms and their swift clattering departure for the scene of the supposed attack. The result was uniformly the same. Instead of Jeb Stuart and the Black Horse cavalry of a predatory band of Valley guerillas, some peacefully grazing cow or uneasily dreaming hog would be disclosed by the prodding bayonets of the forlorn hope as the sole *teterrima causa belli*. The writer's encounter with one of these hysterical guards is vividly impressed upon his memory. The scene was the College *campus*—the hour, well, anywhere between midnight and dawn. A social function of unusual attractiveness in neighboring Georgetown had lured the young collegian to disregard the rule connected with the early closing of the

College gates. In anticipation of his late return he had secured, from the officer of the day, the coveted countersign. Knowing by experience that it was impracticable to bribe the *Cerberus* of the outer portal nothing remained for our adventurer but to scale the wall and trust to the cabalistic countersign for his safe and unobserved attainment of the dormitory. Fate, however, was against him. He had climbed the wall successfully at a point of deepest shadow and was speeding stealthily across the intervening *campus* when every nerve was thrilled by the sharp and angry call of a hitherto invisible sentry to halt! followed by the demand "Who goes there?" Before our startled truant could make the usual response of "A friend!" the ominous click of the musket lock was borne upon his ears and, in the dim light of the stars, he beheld the point of a bayonet nervously agitated within a few inches of his breast. The situation was embarrassing to say the least. The sentry's trepidation was manifested by the quivering of his piece and the excited repetition of his demand for the countersign. This our student found to his consternation he had totally forgotten. Like the self-imprisoned poacher in Ali Baba's new found cave, he ran over, frantically, in his mind every conceivable syllable that could, in the remotest degree, recall the cabalistic countersign. He was confronted by two evils almost equally formidable. The one was the imminent danger of being shot by the accidental discharge of the nervously handled weapon—the other that the sentry's cry of alarm would disclose the fact of his escapade to the College authorities. To obviate the latter our student resorted to every persuasive of which he was master, but in vain. The sentry could not be persuaded that he had before him a mild and inoffensive academician instead of a rebel

scout backed, in the shadows beyond, by a whole detachment of bloodthirsty guerillas. Finding that no alternative remained, therefore, the sentry was urged to call the guard which, being done, our hero was recognized by the Corporal and permitted to seek the quiet and seclusion of his couch without further interruption. Whether it was that the eye of an indulgent prefect refused to note the dereliction or the frequency of similar alarms had made the college guardians indifferent to inquiry, I do not know, but in this instance, certainly, the penalty failed to follow the crime.

During the sojourn of the 69th within the College bounds a most impressive sight was witnessed by the writer. The men of the regiment were, probably without exception, Catholics. A temporary altar had been erected for their spiritual accommodation at the southern extremity of the *campus* which overlooked the Potomac and was plainly visible from the opposite hills which formed the steep Virginia shore. It was the custom of the regiment, which numbered 1,400 men, to assemble, daily, on the open *campus* for early mass. On an especially cloudless morning in May of that year, 1861, the men were kneeling, nearly prostrate, at the canon—the most solemn moment of the service. The regimental band which, up to that moment, had poured a flood of sacred melody upon the palpitating air, was silent and not a sound broke the solemn stillness save, possibly, the twitter of a passing bird. At this supreme crisis in the sacred ceremony my eyes were rivetted to the crest of the opposite hills by the glitter of arms and military accoutrements. A group of Confederate officers, attended by a small guard of cavalrymen engaged in reconnoitering and attracted, evidently, by the recent strains of martial music, had halted when in full view of the college grounds and

were intently studying, by the aid of glasses, the curious and unusual spectacle afforded by the reverent worshipers in blue. It was like the ominous hush which precedes the bursting of the tropical tornado. But two months hence and the participants in that peaceful May-morn pantomime would be struggling for victory and finding death or wounds in the coil of battle on the blood-soaked plain of Manassas by the reddened stream of Bull Run. The picture is one of the few which life presents to remain unfaded at its close.

During the period of which I speak the public facility for making the journey (and the term may be taken in its literal sense) from the Navy Yard to Georgetown was afforded by the omnibus line controlled and owned by Cornelius Vanderwercken. I remember the name because it was intimately associated in my boyish fancy, with that of the mysterious Vanderdecken of Flying Dutchman notoriety. Not that there was anything in the speed of Vanderwercken's vehicles to suggest the rapid-transit qualities of Vanderdecken's spectral ship. But—and I blush to own it—a fancied resemblance between the names ever associated the two in my boyish fancy and the coincidence was probly strengthened by comparing the discomforts of the omnibus with the legendary ills which threatened him who would rashly board the pirate's spellbound craft. These ills, however, I always aimed to mitigate by climbing to a seat beside the driver from which coigne of vantage I could interest myself sufficiently in passing objects to measurably forget the misery of being jolted and bruised, almost beyond endurance, over the rough pavement of Pennsylvania Avenue.

The unpaved condition of the streets and avenues at this time was productive of unqualified discomfort. In the comparatively dry season of summer every electric

tempest was heralded by a veritable dust-storm of corresponding violence and of all-pervading dimensions. The effect of these frequent visitations upon the inflammable tempers of model housewives may be imagined but cannot be described. In the wet months of winter and spring the carriage-ways were often rivers of mud and, in some instances, were, indeed, absolutely impassable. The continual movement of apparently interminable wagon trains and of large bodies of cavalry and infantry tended, as may be imagined, to intensify the discomforts of the situation.

Happily, the aera of Vanderwercken stages like that of the Flying Dutchman is relegated to the past and sanctified by tradition. The cobble-stones and the dirt carriageways are no less traditional and as much may be, luckily, said of the marvellous perversion of taste which would have made of Pennsylvania Avenue a perpetual *memento mori* by the presence, throughout its length, of the prim and shadeless—the inexpressibly funereal poplar of Lombardy.

It is somewhat more than a century since the first President of the Republic made his negotiations for the land which should constitute the nation's capital. A century has not yet passed since Congress first assembled within its bounds. A hundred years ordinarily counts for little in the age of cities or states. History, for instance, fails to measure the time which actually elapsed before the vaulting ambition of Rome o'erleaped the narrow bounds of the *urbs quadrata*. It was many centuries before the unequal growth of London gave assurance of her present peerless development and the same may be said of Paris and of other relatively important capitals of European states. Compared with the older prototypes to which I refer the growth of Washington may truly be said to have been

phenomenal. In this it naturally partakes the national development of which it is the center and the heart. In the ratio of the nation's progress has been the progress of its central political mart. Sensitive to every economic influence that could affect the general weal, the city has reflected, in its physical no less than in its social, moral and intellectual features, every stage in the evolution of national advancement, manners, ethics and mental culture. It has shared no less in the operation of those causes which have retarded national development. Chief among these was the almost incomprehensible cancer on the body politic—the blight of human slavery. With the excision of this tumor by the heroic surgery of war the vital fluid, hitherto arrested in its energizing flow, coursed through every artery and informed all parts of the corporate system alike. It was impossible that the heart should fail to receive its proportionate supply and, from that happy period, may be dated the establishment of perfect sympathy and accord between the development of the nation and the development of the capital city. The cause which quickens the pulse of any member of this ideal system of nationality affects, as by a subtle telepathy, the cardiac center and is fostered or resisted just as it may be beneficial or injurious to the political body.

As we glance, in retrospection, through the vista of an hundred years how the heart is quickened and the imagination fired by the dramatic scenes which have been enacted within these narrow bounds. What matchless eloquence has been evoked in the assertion of our nation's rights—of the liberty of our kind. What anathemas have been hurled at wrong, at tyranny, at oppression. What colossi have moved among us—what intellects have towered in our midst. The very

streets are consecrated by the tread of heroes. At every turn arise Valhallas constructed by the reverential touch of Memory.

Here has been the seat of a line of illustrious executives. From Washington to Cleveland—what nation, known to the historiographer, presents a succession of rulers equally unselfish, equally patriotic and equally free from the vices which inure, almost universally, to the exercise of similarly extensive powers?

From this point has radiated, through all these years and to all parts of the political system, the potent expression of the legislative will. Here the destinies of the nation have been shaped by Clay, by Webster and by a host of statesmen and earnest students of political science. This city has been, at all times, the rallying point of the nation's defenders. It was so in war—it is preeminently so in time of peace. Here is being expounded and here *has* been expounded, from time to time, since the foundation of the government, the tenets of that wonderful condensation of human wisdom as applied to the government of man—the Constitution. Here the pen of Marshall was busied for more than thirty years in the exposition of that great charter of our rights and government. Here he and his illustrious colleagues and his and their successors have been, and the survivors yet are, familiar figures upon the streets and thoroughfares of the capital whose stability they have done so much to assure.

Had the Constitution done no more than render possible such an august and irreproachable tribunal for the administration of justice its claim upon our admiration must have been transcendant. But it has done more. In creating the Nation's Capital it has provided a sanctuary for the Nation's freedom—a training ground for its liberties. It is one thing to be free—it

is another and a greater thing to merit freedom. Freedom and ignorance are halting companions. Neither is freedom compatible with vice. The soul that is enthralled cannot animate the stroke which would free. Hence the need of instruction and of instructors in the science of liberty. Hence the need of a place which should be devoted, exclusively, to that exalted cult. Appreciating this need the framers of the Constitution provided for the government's exclusive control of such place as might forever serve for the location of the temple of national freedom. Here it is provided that the sacred rites shall be perpetually performed and here it is ordained that the sacred fires shall burn unquenchably.

Made sacred by the associations of a glorious past, our city claims the admiration of mankind not less on that account than because of her rapidly developing physical and intellectual graces. She has garnered, in rich profusion, the mental treasures of the globe. In every department of science—in the realms of literature and of art she is the peer of every co-existent capital. It needs only the erection of that fondest dream of her founder—a National University—to make her limits the intellectual Mecca of the civilized world.

Fifty years of progress have been compassed within the period that has elapsed since the termination of the war. Few streets remain unpaved and the urban limits are being rapidly pushed to the exterior bounds of the District. The awkward municipal divisions which formerly characterized the latter have yielded place to an autonomous government. What was Georgetown once is West Washington now and the Levy Court has long since expired with the County it was supposed to govern. Miles of stately edifices usurp the place of squalid tenements or unconverted marsh land. The

prophetic plan of Washington and the zealous L'Enfant has been realized in all essential details. The nation, become acquainted with its capital through the exigencies of the war, has decreed that the future prosperity of that capital shall be commensurate with its own.

It may be said of our beloved Capital City that as she was, practically, baptized by the fires of war so has she been by war confirmed in her career of prosperity. Consecrated forevermore to Peace and to the Arts of peace, may she be perpetual with the Nation which gave her birth!